

**News Release from**  
**The Honorable Sandra Doorley**  
**Monroe County District Attorney**

March 18, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Michael Ross Found Guilty of Attempted Murder**  
**Conviction First in NYS for Strangulation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree**

Rochester, NY- Today, Michael Ross was convicted by a Monroe County jury of Attempted Murder in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree and Strangulation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree for the May 17, 2011, assault of then 96 year old Vernice Warfield in the City of Rochester. On that date, Ross, was helping Ms. Warfield, who he had known for years, clean windows in her Herkimer Street home when he violently attacked her, strangling her until she lost consciousness. Assuming that she was deceased, Ross left the scene, but Warfield eventually regained consciousness and alerted authorities. Police were able to apprehend Ross a short time later due to the fact that he was wearing a GPS ankle bracelet as a condition of his most recent parole.

According to the New York State Prosecutor's Training Institute, today's verdict is the first known conviction by a jury in New York State of the crime of Strangulation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree. Prior to the enactment of this statute in November 2010, those defendants, who strangled their victims but the victims survived without permanent injury, were often charged only with misdemeanor Assault in the Third Degree.

Monica O'Brien Chief of the Monroe County District Attorney's Office Elder Abuse Bureau prosecuted the case for the People.

"Michael Ross is a dangerous individual with a history of violent behavior. Today's verdict ensures that Ross will be off the streets for a very long time. I am happy the New York State Legislature finally recognized the violent and dangerous nature of strangulation," said O'Brien. "Today's verdict is an accomplishment for prosecutors around the state who can now appropriately prosecute some of our State's most violent offenders. Ms. Warfield's strength and courage throughout this proceeding was remarkable. I hope today's verdict provides her some sense of justice. "

Michael Ross is being held without bail and will be sentenced April 18<sup>th</sup> before Judge James Piampiano. Ross is expected to be adjudicated a Persistent Violent Felon and will face up to 25 years to Life in prison.

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